Keep your New Year’s resolution
*It could help prevent Alzheimer’s*

Every year, millions make the same resolution: Hit the gym and shed those extra pounds. It’s a great first step to a healthy lifestyle, but many resolutions fall by the wayside.

Being active can have a big impact on your waistline as well as your mind. According to research, improving your heart health may reduce your chances of Alzheimer’s disease, the most common type of dementia, said Kaci Fairchild, Ph.D., ABPP, a board-certified geropsychologist, who conducts research supported by the Alzheimer’s Association.

**Live stronger**

Today’s older adult population is growing, and those adults are living longer. One in four 65-year-olds will live past age 90, and one in 10 will live past age 95, she said. With this trend comes an increased possibility of developing Alzheimer’s since age is the No. 1 risk factor for the disease.

“The name of the game isn’t how to live longer, it’s how to live longer and stronger,” Fairchild said.

Preventing or delaying the onset of Alzheimer’s is “a game of risk factors,” recognizing what you can control and focusing your energies there, she said. One of those controllable risk factors is your cardiovascular health. Good heart health reduces the chances of obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes and other risk factors for cardiovascular disease — a risk factor for Alzheimer’s disease.

In addition, the Mayo Clinic has found that people who improved their heart health through exercise in their 40s and 50s reduced their risk of developing Alzheimer’s by 33 percent. People who started working out in their 60s and 70s dropped their risk by 30 percent, Fairchild said. Those who exercised were found to have lower levels of the proteins that cause Alzheimer’s disease, and their brains looked different from those who didn’t exercise.

**Get active**

To find your workout sweet spot, David Welch, a nurse with Enloe Medical Center’s Cardiac Rehabilitation Program, recommends breaking a sweat at least three times a week, for at least 15 minutes. Ideally, though, you should exercise four to six times a week, for 40 to 60 minutes, focusing on intensity and endurance.

“We need a high enough intensity to apply some stress, but we don’t need a really high intensity because [if we have that], we won’t be able to continue the activity long enough to get an aerobic workout,” Welch said.

When it comes to choosing an activity, you have options: walk, bike, swim, etc. The important part is to keep at it. To achieve a regular exercise routine, Welch recommends you:

- Start slowly and set realistic goals.
- Find a workout buddy and do something you enjoy.
- Plan for obstacles like rain and limited sunlight.
- Have fun!

Visit [www.enloe.org/fitness](http://www.enloe.org/fitness) for tips on creating a workout plan that’s right for you.
Psychiatrist Scott Nichols, M.D., was in Africa during the fall. But it wasn’t a safari that took him there — he’s already done that. It was the chance to share his knowledge of how to help cancer patients emotionally and physiologically.

“It’s very different there, socioeconomically, but there are similar problems,” said Dr. Nichols, who is the medical director of Enloe Behavioral Health.

Dr. Nichols presented at the 2017 AORTIC Conference on Cancer in Kigali, Rwanda. Hosted by the African Organization for Research and Training in Cancer (AORTIC), the conference brings together specialists from around the world to advance public policy changes, research, prevention and treatment of cancers prevalent in Africa, and to provide clinical updates and training for oncologists and other cancer professionals in African countries.

Being one of very few psychiatrists in the U.S. who sees patients in a cancer center, Dr. Nichols has great insight to share, but it’s his passion for helping patients and the relationships he’s built during two previous conferences in Africa that keep him going back.

“I have the skillset, and they are in need of it,” he said. “I can make a unique contribution, and I am inspired by the people I work with there. I want to help them.”

**Spreading the knowledge**

During the conference, Dr. Nichols presented three times: once on supporting families with cancer and twice on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in cancer patients. During one of his presentations on PTSD, he shared how African caregivers can help their patients dealing with the disorder in one or two sessions.

“Most of the time when people are treated in the United States for post-traumatic stress disorder, they have multiple sessions,” he said. “There are just not the resources for that in Africa.”

Dr. Nichols spoke in roundtable settings, allowing him to interact with his audience and receive direct feedback that shaped the focus of another conference in Kenya in September 2018.

“I’m hoping everyone came away with something they can take home and use immediately,” he said. Some of the techniques he shared were ways to help patients get “unstuck” so they can talk to their families, make plans for treatment and make arrangements if they face advanced cancer.

**Steps forward**

The first time Dr. Nichols attended the AORTIC conference was in 2013. During that trip, he realized how much African caregivers do for their patients with “so little.”

“Someone described to me that there were no oncologists in their country who speak the national language,” he said. “They hire oncologists from China, and there have to be multiple translators in between.”

But the conferences are making a difference, helping to educate caregivers and bringing about programs to support patients emotionally and physiologically. For instance, there’s now a graduate program in psycho-social care for cancer patients in Nigeria, a Nigerian professional organization for psycho-social care for cancer and a Kenyan cancer organization for psycho-social care.

“Seeing these huge steps forward has been really rewarding,” Dr. Nichols said. “In 2013, we were just asking ourselves, ‘Could we do this?’ By 2015 there were two programs up and running.”

Matthew Loscalzo, a social worker and the executive director of Supportive Care Medicine at City of Hope, a National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center in Duarte, Calif., has known Dr. Nichols for years and calls him a “star” in his field. He said the work Nichols is doing in Africa is “extremely important.”

“He is a gifted teacher and I applaud what he has done for populations who are often ignored,” Loscalzo said. “His work in Africa is so needed, and he will have a major impact on how psycho-social care is provided to cancer patients and their families.”

Visit [www.enloe.org/behavioralhealth](http://www.enloe.org/behavioralhealth) for information on Enloe’s psychiatry services.
New community leaders join Enloe’s Board of Trustees

Enloe Medical Center is governed by dedicated community members who volunteer their time to serve our local, nonprofit hospital. This year, Enloe welcomes Dan Blair and Walt Schafer to its Board of Trustees.

Dan Blair is a senior public affairs representative for PG&E, acting as the primary liaison for public and nonprofit organizations in a 10-county region. An employee of PG&E since 2011, Blair previously served as senior business analyst, focusing on the management and innovation of payment channels.

In other positions, Blair taught political science and public relations at California State University, Chico, and served as a program development manager and senior management analyst for Butte County.

He holds a master’s degree in political science and bachelor’s degree in economics from Chico State. He serves on the board for 3CORE, a nonprofit economic development planning and coordinating agency, and he volunteers for youth sports programs.

Walt Schafer, Ph.D., is a highly accomplished educator, consultant and administrator who taught in higher education for 41 years, including 30 years at the Department of Sociology at Chico State. Schafer has held several positions in research and administration at universities and published several books on stress management.

In 1979, Schafer co-founded Enloe’s Cardiac Rehabilitation Program and worked as a stress management specialist with the program until 1992. He also founded and directed Enloe’s Stress and Health Center. Schafer completed his bachelor’s degree, master’s degree and a doctorate in sociology at the University of Michigan.

He is an active member of the Chico Rotary Club, having served as club president and board member, and he continues to lead Chico Rotary’s community development projects near Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. He has also served on the board of directors of Chico Running Club, Chico Velo Cycling Club, the Centerville Recreation and Historical Association, and the Honey Run Covered Bridge Association.

For a complete list of current Enloe Board of Trustees members, their biographies and photographs, visit www.enloe.org/governance.
Brr! It’s cold out there! Warm up with a hearty cabbage soup served over rice that’s delicious and diabetes-friendly.

Number of servings: 6

**Ingredients**
- ½ pound ground round
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 ½ cups sliced onion
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 cups shredded cabbage
- 28-ounce can petite diced tomatoes, low-sodium
- 14-ounce can low-sodium beef broth
- 3 cups water
- 2 tablespoons parsley
- 3 cups cooked brown rice

**Directions**
2. Add olive oil, onions, and garlic and saute briefly.
3. Mix in cabbage and continue stirring. Add tomatoes, broth and water. Bring to a boil.
4. Reduce heat and let ingredients cook for about 10 minutes on simmer. Sprinkle in parsley.
5. Place half a cup of cooked rice into a large bowl and ladle soup over it. Serve immediately.

Nutritional information per serving: 232 calories, 6 g fat, 369 mg sodium, 34 g carbohydrate, 4 g dietary fiber, 7 g sugars and 12 g protein

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**Donate to the Enloe Foundation**

Enloe Medical Center has undertaken a multi-year project to create a Cardiovascular Care Center that will expand and improve facilities and equipment for cardiovascular care in the North State. Learn more at [www.enloe.org/give](http://www.enloe.org/give) or call (530) 332-4550.

**Classes, Events & Support Groups**

Enloe Medical Center provides a variety of support programs to promote health and wellness. Find more details at [www.enloe.org/events](http://www.enloe.org/events).

- **1/19** Celebration of Healing Arts
- **2/3** Walk with a Doc
- **3/3** Walk with a Doc
- **3/10** Heart & Sole: Run for Wellness
- **4/7** Walk with a Doc
- **4/19** Pre-Diabetes Class

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